

Shirley Historical Commission
Shirley Center Historic District Commission

Meeting of Tuesday, June 27, 2023
Town Offices, 7 Keady Way, Shirley, 5:30 pm

Agenda

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| 5:30 pm | Approval of Minutes of April 25, 2023 |
| 5:35 pm | Final Review and approval of new draft for Guidelines for Solar Installations in the Shirley Center Historic District |
| 6:00 pm | Ratify COA 2023-04 for 191 Center Road repair of rear second floor deck not-applicable due to not visible from Center Rd. |
| 6:10pm | Appoint Historical Commission member to the new Community Preservation Committee. |
| 6:30pm | Adjournment |

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Rev.4 5 2023

Guidelines for Solar Panel Installations in Historic Districts

Purpose:

The purpose of these Guidelines is to provide guidance both to persons considering the use of solar energy panels within the Shirley Center Historic District (SCHD) and to members of the SCHD Commission in acting on such an application. When ruling on applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, the Commission shall consider the policy of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to encourage the use of solar energy systems and to protect solar access.

Context:

In making a determination for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the SCHD

Commission will use the following general standards as a basis for decisions:

The historic character of a property, and its contribution to the character of the district as a whole shall be retained and preserved. The alterations of features that distinguish a property diminishes its integrity and shall be avoided.

Installation of modern functional items such as electrical fixtures, antennae, etc. shall not destroy or detract from the historic materials and features that characterize the property. The new work shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, materials, and architectural details of the historic property.

Guidelines:

These Guidelines shall apply to the proposed installation of solar energy systems as defined in Section 1A of MGL Chapter 40A.

For purposes of these Guidelines, the following terms shall be given these respective meanings:

‘Building’ – a combination of materials forming a shelter for persons, animals, or property.

‘Historic Significance’ – the importance of a building or property to the history of the Town, taking into consideration the building and/or property, its prominence, its particular site, and the District in which it is located.

‘Solar Panel’ – any constituent part of an operating solar energy system. A finding that the installation of solar panels is appropriate in an Historic District is valid only for so long as the panels are in use, and any Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of solar panels will be conditioned on their removal once they are no longer in use. Once approved, solar equipment may be replaced only with equipment of like kind. Replacement equipment that is not exactly like prior-approved equipment will constitute a change in design requiring a new application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

‘Unique Architectural Character’ – being a ‘one-of-a-kind example, or nearly so, of a particular architectural style or period.

1. Primary factors that the SCHDC shall consider in determining whether to permit the installation of a solar panel or panels on a building are the building’s age, historic significance and/or unique architectural character. The older, more historically significant and/or architecturally unique that a building is, the less willing the SCHDC should be to permit any solar panels visible from the governing street on which the building is located.

2. Solar panels shall not be permitted on any building’s roof surfaces that front on (that is, face) the governing street on which the building is located, *including buildings with a front that is at a right angle to the governing street.*

3. Solar panels may be located on a building's roof surfaces that do not front on (that is, face) the governing street but which are visible from that street, particularly if the panels are partially obscured (e.g. by other roof lines, architectural features such as chimney or dormer, or other architectural protrusions). Solar panels may be located on accessory buildings if the size, shape and locations does not dominate the roof surface visible from the governing street.

4. Solar panels otherwise permissible should be prohibited if there is an alternate location for the panel(s) which would fulfill the main objective of the solar installation but which would be less visible from the governing street.

5. Any solar panel permitted on a building's roof must be parallel to the roof surface, no more than three inches above the surface, and must minimize visual disruption of the roof surface in general, with panels held back from the roof edge at a distance appropriate under the circumstances. The SCHDC shall determine the solar panel setback distances on a case-by-case basis considering the visibility of the solar panels from the governing street. Piping, cables and other associated equipment must be concealed from view, and all solar panel installations must be reversible without damaging any feature of the building on which it was installed.